

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Richard Arakawa, 65, former camp store worker, Kaheka

"We [told the plantation] what we will sell and what we will not sell. We not trying to compete. We want to make it more convenient for the people who are living in Kaheka. More for soft drinks and things like that. Daily foodstuff."

Richard Arakawa, Okinawan, was born May 29, 1915, in Kaheka, Maui. His father was the head of a kompang gang for MA Company. The second of eleven children, Arakawa graduated from Maui High School in Hamakua Poko in 1935. While attending school, Arakawa picked up merchandise and helped tend the family store. He also helped his parents obtain the license from the plantation to operate the store.

In 1939, Arakawa left Maui for Honolulu and has lived there ever since. Married since 1941, he and his wife, Shigeko, have five children. He is a retired State clerk.

Currently living in Palolo, Arakawa enjoys gardening, and is an active bowler.

Tape No. 7-31-1-80

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Richard Arakawa (RA)

February 1, 1980

Palolo Valley, Oahu

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Mr. Richard Arakawa. Today is February 1, 1980, and we're at his home in Palolo Valley.

Okay, can you tell me when you were born and where you were born?

RA: I was born in Kaheka, Paia, Maui. And that's on May 29, 1915.

WN: What type of work did your father do?

RA: My father used to be sort of this--I don't know if it's slang or not--but they call that kompang kō or something like that. And he has jurisdiction over, maybe, twelve or fifteen men that works under him. And they are sort of a group, you know, yeah? And they work Sunday, if they want to, this and that, and they get paid accordingly. But when they harvest the cane, then each one [worker], my father keeps the record of how many days they worked from the time they started the field till they harvest. And according to the days they worked, they get compensated, see? Some will get more than the others because they put more time in that field.

And the boss leave up to them to do whatever they want on the field. They [RA's father] want to ask plantation [for workers] to go in to cut grass, then the plantation will charge my father for the number of days they put from outside help to weed the grass, like that, see? It's a contractlike, you know. And they get paid every month according to the day. They were getting dollar a day, see? That's all they were getting--dollar a day. And when they harvest the cane, then they get one lump--maybe \$2,000, \$2,500. And that depends on the number of days--each man--they work. They work together as a group, see, on that.

WN: So, until he collected the \$2,000, \$2,500, how did you folks live on just a dollar a day? Was it easy?

RA: Yeah, those days, because penny could buy many things, too, yeah? And, thinking now, I think I rather go back the old days, though.

Like the bread was five cents, yeah? And things like that. Even [with] penny, you can buy lots--pennies, you could buy. Like now, cannot do that.

WN: When you were growing up in Kaheka, where did you folks get your groceries and stuff?

RA: You mean, before we opened the store, you're talking? That's all from the plantation [store]. They charge. See, they have this plantation order man come inside, and he would come and ask my mother. In the afternoons, he comes around and asks what you need--rice, sugar, things like that. And then, we put the order inside. Those are made through payroll deduction, end of the month.

So, many times, the balance is carried, but after they get the year product [harvest], they pay 'em all one time--the balance, they carry. The plantation would understand that with thirty-one dollar [a month pay], you cannot carry all that. But with five dollar, you used to buy a lot, though. Even the rice was, maybe, three dollar a bag or something like that.

WN: For a hundred-pound bag?

RA: Hundred-pound bag. That's all I recall, long time And meat like that, we raise our own chicken; we raise our own vegetable; we raise our own pig, see? Plantation used to allow the pigpen below the camp, and anybody who wants to raise pig can go over there and raise. Get a stall-like, you know? You take your slop down there.

Each one has his own. So, had about, maybe, fifty pens. You had to wash your own. But I assume plantation must have made the--it's way before my time--but they must have made the pen, because it's concrete, all, the floor. And then, the ditch flows through that. When you wash the pigpen, all the water goes certain place--down. Probably it goes to the sugar field side in a gulch.

WN: You said had fifty pigpens?

RA: I would say about that.

WN: That's one pigpen per family?

RA: No, some had two; some had three. Some people don't like to raise, see? Some people like to raise. Like we had only one. I assume, I think, when you give up that pen, maybe, you can sell to the next person. I'm not too sure. But they had about fifty--I would say--pigpen. It's all close by. You know what I mean? One stall here, the next one, next one, like that.

WN: The plantation would, sort of, rent it out to you folks?

RA: No, not rent it out. We don't pay any to the plantation. Just

like, you do what you want with it. But then, the person will reapply for that, then when he wants to give up, probably he will sell to the guy two, three, four, one. Say, "I'll give you for five dollars." Then they take it for five dollars. I used to know they used to sell that.

When we kill the pig, they sell to each one--the neighbors. One pound, two pound, like that. Then, next time, another person kill. Then, they take order, and we buy from them. That's how they used to operate in the camp.

WN: Were all the ethnic groups--Okinawans, Naichi--did they have pigpens?

RA: Yeah, Naichi had too, but more Okinawa people. And then, very few Filipinos. More Okinawa people had the pigpen, I think. Yeah.

WN: How many families do you think or how many houses were there in Kaheka?

RA: I would say about 100 families, yeah, in Kaheka Camp.

WN: And out of that 100, how much do you think was Okinawan?

RA: Hmm. I would say close to fifty, maybe. Fifty, oh, let's say maybe about forty. And then, maybe, forty Japanese [Naichi]. Then come to Puerto Rican, Filipino, Hawaiian, and Spanish, I think. Would be on that ratio, I would think. Plenty . . .

WN: So, plenty Okinawans, then?

RA: Yeah, we had quite a bit over there. Kaheka. I would think about that. We had Japanese Club over there, too. [We] had Japanese school, so my father used to be the treasurer for that--Kaheka district only. All the people who had children going to the Paia Japanese School would come to our home and pay their dues. You know, if they had three children, so much per child. My father would collect that [and] record all. Then, end of the month, my father would go to Paia--the main treasury--go to their home and pay off all the money. This would be for the people that have paid that, eh?

WN: The people that came to take your orders, did they come from the big Paia Plantation Store?

RA: Yeah, the main plantation store. His [order taker's] name was Mr. Miyata. Before that, was a Mr. Urada. And then, later on, Mr. Miyata. What year he [Mr. Urada] moved out, I'm not too sure, but he moved out and went to Peahi, Maui. That's Haiku side. He opened his own store. Then Mr. Miyata came from Hamakua Poko where he was working in that [plantation branch] store. Whether he was salesman there, I don't know, but from Hamakua Poko, he moved to Kaheka Camp--the same house that Mr. Urada used to [live]. He became a order man. I think once a week, he used to come around

and take orders--whatever you want. Then plantation would deliver that.

WN: Oh, you mean this Mr. Murata lived in Kaheka?

RA: Miyata lived in Kaheka, yeah. Took over Urada's place.

WN: So, you folks all knew him already before he started?

RA: No, no. He's new. We wouldn't know him. We know Mr. Urada, but not Mr. Miyata. After he came, then Mr. Urada probably did--I don't know, I'm not home, see, we were school--maybe, came around and introduce him that, "He will take my place because I'm moving out from this camp. I'm going up to--" He bought his own property, up the Haiku side, to open his own store. Then, thereafter, we buy from Mr. Miyata. But besides that, they had another salesman come from [a] Kahului Store. Onishi Store. And that's Mr. [Chosoku] Kochi [another interviewee]. So, we had two salesmen, actually--one from plantation [store] and one from outside [store].

WN: Any other stores in Kahului or Paia that used to come up?

RA: No, only that two that I recall. Onishi Store and Paia Plantation Store.

WN: You said that your parents used to charge the goods. They would only pay every twenty months when the kompang harvest is . . .

RA: No, every month, they may deduct so much. They know you need so much money, so they take so much out that you could be liveable. The balance, they wait till--they know that they going to have a big harvest--and at that time, they deduct the balance, whatever you owe.

WN: By deduction, they took it out of your father's paycheck, or did they bill him?

RA: No, they take 'em out from the paycheck. That's the way they used to operate. They don't send no bill, I think. It's all payroll deduction.

WN: What about the Onishi, which was private? How did they . . .

RA: Those, I think, the man used to come and collect. So, sometime, we are delinquent, but he will let go and come the following month. That's all cash, you know. Afterwards. You know, they deliver, then, next time, the man would come and say so much you owe. Then, if you cannot pay all, you pay whatever you can.

WN: So, the Onishi would know that your father was doing kompang, so he couldn't pay until later on?

RA: Yeah, maybe that's so, but they became good friends too, yeah? He come and eat at our home, have dinner. So, as far as the money, no problem. But, somehow, my parents could manage because my brother worked, too. With my father--kompang. I had two brothers. My oldest brother and my third brother worked with my dad. So, three of their income was sufficient to that time.

WN: Did your mother work?

RA: No, my mother just stayed home. Yeah, my mother stayed home.

WN: Did she do any kind of laundry work for single people . . .

RA: No, no laundry, no nothing. Just take care the children. After all, we had eleven children, you know. So, she just did the cooking, that's all. Nothing else. Up till the time the store [was started]. After the store, yeah, then she worked. She was the main worker on the store.

Can't believe, no? Dollar a day [for plantation work], boy. So, the most you get would be thirty-one dollar if [you work] thirty-one day. That means you worked every day, Saturday and Sunday, you know.

WN: Could he rest Saturday and Sunday if he wanted to?

RA: Yeah, if he wanted, he could rest. That's his own, that's why, see? The time he put inside the field. But you get bonus, you know, if you work more than twenty-one or twenty-eight days, or something like that, I think. Then, you get two dollar or two dollar half [\$2.50] extra on your pay. So, that means, you [work] thirty-one days, then, maybe, you get thirty-five dollars. They call that "bonus." For working. (Chuckles)

WN: For working . . .

RA: Extra, you know. I think if you work twenty-eight days or something like that, I think, then you get bonus.

WN: What about the people who weren't doing kompang? About how much did most of them make?

RA: Um, shee, the most, I think the track man--you know, those that carry the railing [i.e., portable track layer]--I think they used to make twice the amount as our parents. I'm not too sure, but that's what I would think. It's a tiresome job. They got to carry the iron rail to set when they harvest the field. They got to put the rail track inside there. I imagine they used to make twice the amount, so maybe two dollar a day or two and a half [\$2.50], I think, though.

WN: But, kompang, you get one dollar a day, plus you get the . . .

RA: After they harvest. That's when they call "kompany money." That's when they get big money. Two thousand dollar, two thousand Depend on the price of the sugar at the time they harvest [and the amount of sugar cane harvested]. That's when they make big celebration. My dad would make a party at home and call all his working people. And come and drink up and eat, and talk about the cane.

"Oh, this year was good crop."

That's all I remember. That used to come every year and a half, so not every year, you know, that one. Year and a half or two years it take before they harvest the cane, see? That's when we get big celebration. Each one get the money, and my dad would check the book. But of course, the days put in, my dad put it in the office every day. So, each one would, more or less, figure out how much they would get by the days they worked.

I remember going sometime, myself, while I was going high school. Like Sundays, I used to go out and work because certain man who supposed to work report that he will not come this Sunday. So, I, in turn, take his place. I get paid the dollar, but he get the days put in for his year--contract money. To his benefit, just like. Just like saying that he worked, but he didn't go to work. I take his place, and I work the whole day in the field. So, I get the [day's] pay, but he has the yearly one because that's one more day added that just like he work, see?.

WN: Oh, so it helps him when they figure it out?

RA: Uh huh [yes]. I know couple time, I did go like that. My dad would ask if I wanted to go, because certain Filipino man will not work.

Say, "Okay, I go."

WN: Most of the sugar workers in those days, when you were growing up, were they kompany?

RA: No, not all kompany. I wouldn't say too many, no? Kompany. Because kompany is something like, they get, maybe, 100 acres or 150 acres--they supposed to be responsible for that. Taking care the field, do this. So, the boss leave it all up to my father, see? Get good crop, they going make that much more money.

The other people would just work only this kind hāpai kō, harvest the cane. The others would be just cutting grass or like that. They not in a group. So, most of the people would like to get [kompany work], but [it was] limited like, you know. I think Kaheka had only four--four like my dad, I think.

WN: Four [kompany] groups?

RA: Yeah, four groups in Kaheka, if I remember right. So, each group

would talk each other. They try to get better crop than the other group, you know.

WN: Did you have to be a good worker or something to get kompany?

RA: Well, more or less, yeah? Because if you not the type that will report to work every day, they'll try leave you out. They will try to get somebody who will work more every day. You got to be good worker too, because you got to do your share of work, too. So, they select. Yeah, they select. They try you out this year. If not that good, then next year, they try leave you out and get another guy in there. So, my dad had about Not all Okinawan people. He had some Naichi people in there. He had Filipino man in there. In fact, he had, one time, one Korean man in there.

WN: How many in his gang?

RA: I think he had about twelve, though. Twelve in that, if I remember. They call that "kompany."

WN: When you were growing up over there [Kaheka], you said there were about almost half Okinawans?

RA: I would say about forty family in Okinawan, and, maybe, forty in Naichi, and the balance was Puerto Rican, Filipinos, and Korean, Hawaiian.

WN: The Okinawans and Naichi, did they follow customs together or were they two separate groups?

RA: I would say, in separate groups. Like New Year, we don't go to their home. The Okinawans would go--you know, New Year--we go to this house. The next one, we go that house, this house, this house. Only the Okinawans, now. But only time, Tenchō-shetsu, the Emperor's Day, then we have a group together, all. Naichi and Okinawan, all in the clubhouse.

WN: What would you folks do?

RA: Oh, get the speeches. They talk about the emperor of Japan, this and that. And then, they say, "Tennō heika banzai" ["Long live the emperor"] and give each kid some kind candies. It's something like Christmas party, you know. They don't go to work, that day. Whatever that day fall, it's a celebration.

We had our own clubhouse, see? The plantation made the house, but I think the club paid for it. And all kind occasion, we go there. From outside [a place other than Kaheka], the movie man would come and show movie, well, they perform. They charge them a fee of five dollars, maybe, for the night, and the organization would get the money for them.

WN: Now, what organization is this?

RA: The Kaheka Japanese Club. And that's Okinawan and Japanese, all together. So, only on Tenchō-setsu, I know we used to meet at the clubhouse in the morning, 9 o'clock. From the Japanese school, the teacher would come and talk about certain thing about Japan, this and that. Then they get the singing. That's the only time I remember the Naichi and Okinawans get together.

But the New Year party, like that, only Okinawans, they go. Maybe the Naichi did the same thing. I really don't know. But we [Okinawans] had our own parties. Go to maybe about twelve, fifteen, twenty different homes. Same old food and finish, "Okay, now, my house," and they go there, drink, eat. And for one hour stay--maybe, one, two hour--go. Whole night, just eat. But now, the custom no more, over here already. That's what it was before--my young days.

WN: Were there any separate Okinawan clubs?

RA: Not that I know. What the Filipinos did, I don't know. Or how the Japanese did, I don't know. But, of course, the Japanese wen buy tsugu mochi, like that. Maybe they did that, and they had their own. But we had our own club like, see? Okinawan club. So, they go to each home.

WN: Did the Okinawans live together? Were the houses together or were they all scattered?

RA: All scattered. Each one [family] has their own home. So, as I say, had more than hundred houses, yeah? Like the one we showed you--the picture--the store and the house behind. [RA is referring to a photo of Arakawa Store.] Some of the houses were three-bedroom house, some had four-bedroom house. Depend on the size of the family. You request the plantation, and they would look--yeah. They'll add another room to your house. Some were only two-bedroom house.

WN: I mean, were the Okinawan houses in one area of Kaheka?

RA: No. All scattered around. Like, side of my home was Naichi. Back was Okinawan. Front was Okinawan. The left side was a Naichi. They not all Okinawan one place, Naichi all one place. No. They all scattered around. Yeah, they all scattered around. Naichi, it's not just one group, like that. The Filipinos were one group because they were more single, yeah. Bachelors, that's why. They live in a one-bedroom house, and it was a long house. I remember because we used to deliver bread over there, that's why.

WN: Oh, you mean, when you had your store?

RA: Yeah, after we got the store, we used to go around the camp, deliver the bread only on Sundays. My brother used to go around. And there were bachelors over there. Otherwise, every family has their own home. Cottage. With their own yard to make their garden.

WN: The pigs that your family raised, did you folks sell a lot of that? The pork?

RA: No, not on commercial base. You know, just to get rid of your slop, so we raise one. Maybe, three months later, we slaughter the pig, and then, take order from different people. Even the Naichi [and] the Filipino people, they all buy how many pound--three pounds. Some take two pound, one pound. So, before you kill, you tell them that you going slaughter the pig, so if you want any meat, like that. And then, what you like--leg, head, whatever.

They make money on that, but not in business form, you know. It's just only one or two that we used to raise. And the other family will kill the next month, so they don't try collide each other, because they got to sell [to] each other. Because you cannot use all by your own self, yeah? So, quite a bit is sold out, and you keep only certain portion for yourself. Then, following week, another family would say they going kill.

"How many?"

You say, "Oh, okay, give me five pound of this meat."

So, some of them, we salt 'em up or make cook in shōyu so you can last it long. No more refrigerator. I no think we had refrigerator those days.

WN: So, with so many people raising pigs, you folks didn't need much meat, then, from the stores?

RA: Very seldom, I can think of going to the butcher market. Although they had--plantation had--a butcher market.

WN: Paia?

RA: Paia. They call that Paia Butcher Market [also known as Paia Meat Market]. It's part of the plantation, see? You could charge if you want to, you go there. But we seldom did that because we had our own chicken, our own eggs. And then, we had our own pig. But then, the other families were raising pigs, so when they slaughter, they would come take order; we buy from them, too, see? So had quite a bit, but more pork. Not beef, though, all pork. And chicken, each family had their own chicken. And you had your own garden--each family had their own garden, too. Right around their houses, you know. So, each one had quite a bit of yard--oh, maybe, about 5,000 square feet or maybe a little bit smaller, I'm not too sure.

Only the furo was community bath. Everybody go to there. We pay, maybe, a dollar a month, or something like that. Because there's a fella who take care heating up the water, take care the bathroom, and all that. We pay him for the furo. They go by size of the

family. The bigger the family, I think you pay little bit more because more, eh? Children, so much; adults, so much. But was cheap. Eventually, later on, each one [family] had their own.

WN: Their own bath?

RA: Yeah. Plantation made, I think.

WN: About when was that?

RA: That would have been about 1935, around 1934 We made the store, 1935, and when move that building, they had that already, so 1935 I was thinking, maybe, around 1932. Nineteen thirty-two [1932], 1930, somewhere around there, each one already have their own shower-room-like--away from the house, though. Plantation made this kind, something like sewer system. Where that water went, I don't know. Must have gone to the gulch, I think, and then used for fertile the field, or not, I'm not too sure.

So, everybody's bathroom is away from the house--laundry and all that. It runs straight down with the concrete ditch they made. When you go and sit on the toilet bowl, it's made of regular wooden box. The waste would drop in a ditch, and the water be running down. So, ours would be here, next-door neighbor here, next one up there--all in a straight row, you know. Where that water goes, I'm not too sure, but that's what it was. Instead of cesspool. So, every home had that. Houses would be all in a row. Then, the sewer line be all away from the house. Then, the next row house would be the same way. So, each home had their own that kind. I won't say flush kind toilet, because water is running already. That's the way it used to be.

WN: The water was always running?

RA: Yeah, seems to me, the water was always running because everybody using the same line of concrete ditch.

WN: What did you feed the pigs?

RA: We feed the pig regular. We go out, and whatever your vegetable you had. We used to go out in the field cut this "pig grass," they call that. It's a purslane, I think, the real name. Purslane is a crawling grass. And then, boil that thing. Mix with--they call that--middling. I don't know what is that--middling or something like that.

WN: It's like some sort of wine?

RA: No, it was sort of in a flour-looking thing. We get that grass and with your slop, we mix 'em up and put little bit middling inside. Something like flour-like stuff. Then, mix 'em up and then, feed the pig.

WN: Where would you get the middling?

RA: That from [Paia] plantation store.

WN: So, you folks generally had your meat, your vegetable, your eggs. What did you actually buy from the plantation store?

RA: The rice, and maybe can goods, yeah? Shōyu, miso, things of that nature. All our clothing. Pants, clothing--all from the plantation store. Material things.

WN: Would the salesman take order on the clothes, too?

RA: No, the clothes, we go down. The plantation store, more only on food stuff. Because the clothing kind, you got to go--fit yourself, eh? Shoes, like that, you got to fit yourself. So, we used to walk down to the store. Oh, about a mile and a half walk to the store. That's the main store. You could get practically anything at the store, see? It was a big, something like a plantation department store. Had all kind stuff. Then, later on, you get Lower Paia [stores], too--private one. We used to go down there, but that [had] nothing to [do with] the plantation. That, you got to pay cash down there. Plantation can charge, see? You use your father's number--his employee number.

WN: But all the stores down Lower Paia you had to pay cash?

RA: We have to pay cash. Cash and carry.

WN: Didn't the Paia Mercantile have salesmen go out to Kaheka?

RA: Oh, yeah. They used to get that one fella. Yeah, [Tadayoshi] Tamasaka [another interviewee] used to come up once in awhile. Yeah. So, there was one--they call that Paia Mercantile--Hanzawa Store. [Paia Mercantile was run by T. Hanzawa.] Yeah, they used to come up, too.

WN: Could you charge with them?

RA: No, we Yeah, I think was charge, too, because the man used to live in Kaheka, too--Tamasaka. He worked for that Paia Mercantile. I'm not too sure, but we didn't do too much buying from them. More Onishi and [Paia] plantation [store]. But I think he used to come up, too, yeah--Paia Mercantile. Maybe the Naichi people were buying from there, I'm not too sure. Like Kochi [order taker for Onishi], Okinawan man, so naturally, we deal more with him, yeah? And then, Miyata is Paia Plantation. He's a Naichi man, but plantation, so can charge, so we deal with him. So, we used to buy more [from] that two stores only. Onishi and them. Onishi, because being Okinawan man [i.e., Mr. Kochi], he comes and eat with us. After he take the order, come and eat with us, and then he goes home.

WN: Onishi, he was from Kahului?

RA: Kahului, yeah. He worked for that Kahului Store.

WN: He lived in Kahului?

RA: That man lived in Kahului--Kochi man, yeah. The Onishi man owns the store, but I don't know who he is. We only know the salesman, Onishi Store, Mr. Kochi.

WN: When you were growing up, what kind of chores did you have to do?

RA: Oh, before the store [was started], I used to raise the garden. Take care garden. Plant beans, lettuce, things like that. That's about all I used to do. Then, if you say for high school days, well, I worked for the post office. I used to make twenty-five dollars a month, see? Almost same as my dad, I used to make.

WN: Oh, yeah? Twenty-five dollars a month? How did you get the post office job in Paia?

RA: That was through the Paia School principal. Because I wasn't going school, too, you know. In fact, one week, I worked with my father. Because the family big [eleven children], that's why my father get hard time. So, he said he like to send me school, but he said the family, otherwise, going get rough time. [RA was the second oldest child.] We didn't have the store, then, see? So, I worked one week at the Paia kompang with my father. Then, the principal found out that I wasn't going high school, so she came with my eighth-grade schoolteacher, Miss Brooks--Pearl Brooks.

She said, "If we find you job, would you go [school]?"

I said, "Well, it depends. If my parents can da kine. I don't mind. I like to go school, but after all, we get big family, so I guess I have to look their side, too." So, I talked to my father, too, and my brother.

They said, "Yeah, go, if you can work."

So, I got the post office job. I was making twenty-five dollars a month.

WN: What did you do in the post office?

RA: Do? Like post office, selling stamps. Same thing what the main clerk would do--sell stamps, make money order, take in the mail, sort out the mail. You know, put 'em in each pigeonhole. And then, when closing time, take all the mail. We used to hand stamp the things, each one. You know, the postage, yeah? Took in, and then, sort 'em out. If to Kahului, Wailuku. If for Honolulu or any other foreign place, we used to throw 'em all in one--Honolulu. Anything--other island one, Honolulu, Japan--all go into Honolulu, and then Honolulu sort 'em out for us, see? That was my work. I make money order, register mail.

WN: Did you do anything special, like maybe, write letters for people or anything like that?

RA: No, no. Nothing of that. Just ordinary post office work.

WN: Were there people who couldn't write English? You know, maybe, wrote all in Japanese, and you had to correct it?

RA: No. So far, not that I know, post office. I never did recall them doing those things.

WN: Paia Post Office served which camps? Just Paia?

RA: No. Paia would serve Kaheka, Paia. And then, Keahua, we used to sort 'em out, and that's plantation, see? I guess, from plantation, used to take it and go to Keahua. Kailua, like that, send 'em out. On Makawao, they had this regular delivery man. He's not connected with the He's sort of contract with the United States, I think, to take the mail up to Makawao and Kula. That's his route--every day. So, he take one time up, and one time, come back. That's all. He get paid for that. They gotta bid for that route, see--mail route. So, like Makawao, we used to just sort 'em out. Makawao, all one bag. He will come and pick it up and take 'em go.

Then, the other kind plantation, Filipino Camp, like that, they used to come to the--we call that--"general service." They don't have no special box, but all the group one is thrown into one box. When they come, we looked at it, and then, give it out. Like Kaheka one, the plantation used to do the service. Like this newspaper, the Miyata man--the store man. He used to deliver the mail. We used to throw 'em all, Kaheka, Kaheka, and then he sort 'em out and deliver.

WN: And deliver house to house?

RA: Yeah. The mail. Because no more post office. Kaheka no more that kind. Like Nippu Jiji, the Japanese paper come, and he used to da kine.

WN: So, this Miyata man, he . . .

RA: Worked the store and that one, yeah. I'm not too sure whether he was compensated for that. Maybe he had a dollar a month service, I think, from each family for that newspaper delivery. That's the way it was, I think.

WN: So, this Mr. Miyata would come how often?

RA: Oh, he comes every day to the post office. Because the [plantation] store was right above the post office.

WN: How often would he go to Kaheka to deliver mail and . . .

RA: He lives Kaheka, eh? That man--Miyata. So, newspaper from here come. Maybe, oh, I would say every day or every other day, I think, he used to deliver the mail. I think he was a mailman, you know, because we [Kaheka residents] don't go down post office. Unless you buy a box. Some people buy a box, then it goes to their box. They know the combination, they open their own mailbox. But those boxes were limited, those days.

WN: So, Mr. Miyata took orders for the store, he delivered . . .

RA: Yeah, I think, and he also delivered the newspaper.

WN: Delivered newspaper and delivered mail, yeah?

RA: Yeah.

WN: Do you remember if he did anything else?

RA: No. That's about all, eh, that's his da kine. The wife used to do laundry for the bosses, I know--Mrs. Miyata. Because I remember helping her deliver one time. Their car broke down. So, she do the ironing and washing and all that, yeah? Then, once a week, go deliver back to the More of them were bosses--plantation bosses, Paia. I guess she charged certain amount of fee for that.

Most of them, they had to do certain kind work to supplement the family, that's the way I was looking. Other kind people who work plantation, the father, maybe, hāpai kō. The other ladies would be just help, too. So, husband and wife used to work [in the fields]. Most of the homes. Most of the homes, both mother and father used to. Because they had what they call yōchien or a lady would take care all the children--you know, plantation kids. But they bring their own kaukau food. And then, the lady would feed them. You have to pay for that service. How much they charge, I really don't know because none of my parents We never did go there, but the other people. They used to call that yōchien.

WN: So, who took care of you folks when you was small?

RA: My mother. Because my mother never did work, yeah? I know the other homes, they leave the children early in the morning. Four thirty [4:30] in the morning, wake up and go, and then they leave 'em at that yōchien. They have to take the kaukau, everything, too--prepare for the kid food, too. There would be some people working there who would take care the kids.

WN: In 1935, your mother started the store, yeah?

RA: Yeah.

WN: Do you know why she decided to start the store?

RA: No, exactly That was Hokama Store that told me, "Oh, Kaheka

don't have any store, so why don't you folks open one? Mama can take care, yeah?"

Because right there [Kaheka], the store going be. So, that's how that thing popped up. The idea was from Hokama Store, you know.

WN: Hokama Store is in . . .

RA: Wailuku. Wailuku, Maui, yeah.

WN: How did you know the Hokama Store?

RA: Because they are relative to my dad, yeah? And every week, we go down there. And my sister worked for them. My sister worked for them for about nine years, I think, with Hokama Store. She board down there, too. Then, that's how it started. So, my dad asked me if I would go and see the boss or somebody from the plantation.

I said, "Yeah. I get no problem." Because already, I had quite a bit of contact with the plantation below bosses, you know. They come to the post office for mail, like that. So, I talked to some of them.

They said, "Yeah, no problem. Why don't you come and see the manager?"

So, I told my father if he would go with me, I would talk to Mr. Baldwin and get their permission. So, we made one day, we went down, and went to his office. He was very nice, but he didn't commit himself at that time.

He said, "Well, let me look it over, and we'll let you know." You know, "We'll let one of the field bosses go up and let you know."

We said what we will sell and what we will not sell. We not trying to compete. We want to make it more convenient for the people who are living in Kaheka. More for soft drinks and things like that. Daily foodstuff. So, Mr. Baldwin was nice about it. He wrote the letter approving that and was praising my dad for working--his attendance, his work was very good, and all that.

Then, he said, "We will put up the house, also, and we'll charge your dad. You don't have to pay all one time. It can be so much a month."

WN: You mean, put up the store?

RA: Store, for us, yeah. All that, the plantation did it. They concrete the floor, put up the house. I believe it was only about 800-something dollars, you know. And for us to get merchandise was no problem because Hokama Store already had lots of experience on the store, so whatever we need, they would get it for us, and this and that. The soda delivery, too, so. Before that, we had no idea of

store. None of us had the experience on it. But the Hokama lady guide us through, see? What to buy, what to do, and what we need. So, that's how the store started. With the approval of Mr. Baldwin.

WN: So, Hokama, they got the goods for you [from somewhere else], or you got the goods from Hokama Store?

RA: Beginning part, they got for us, you know. Yeah, what they order, they order little bit extra, and then, tell us to go and sell that. Then, later on, she [Mrs. Hokama] make connection with certain salesmen, and where I could go and get certain things. Certain things I cannot get, I'll let her know, and she'll get it for me. So, she contact the soda delivery man to go up the store. We had two soda delivery--Maui Soda and Star Soda. Star Soda is [owned by] Takitani, yeah? Two, this soda man would come up and deliver soda water. And the ice cream came from Star Soda Works [Star Soda and Ice Works]. They loan us the box, see? That's their box--ice box. You know the one? It's their box, so we buy all from them.

WN: They loaned you the box to keep in the store?

RA: Yeah, that's their da kine. And they service that. But we got to buy all ice cream from them, see?

WN: But you didn't have to pay at all for that box?

RA: No, not that I recall, no. As long as you buy their ice cream. Takitani Store.

WN: Okay, so when you went to that Baldwin to talk to him, he told you what kind of merchandise you can sell and what you cannot sell?

RA: Yeah. In a brief form, you know. Like clothing, like that, he said. But from our side, we told him, too. We thought maybe he won't let us do if we tell 'em, oh, we going to sell all kind things. So, from our side, we told him it's more for the daily use kind. More food things, and no clothing. So, he didn't tell us direct, "Okay, you don't sell this." He said go ahead. He looked how many children we had, yeah?

WN: Eleven children?

RA: Yeah. And another thing, I never used the school principal. Because the school principal, Miss Fleming, is something to Baldwin, you know. But I didn't use that thing. I don't think I mentioned about that. Because the school principal was very nice to me. That's how I got through the post office work and all that, yeah?

So, no restriction, though, on that. Although, we didn't sell clothing and things like that. Even rice like that, we didn't sell. It's more sausages, yeah, can goods. Sausages. The kind fast-going kind, we did. Like sardines, things like that, we used

to sell. We make our own ice cake. And what else we used to? We used to sell little bit this kind cone sushi, yeah?

WN: Your mother made that?

RA: Homemade. My mother makes that.

WN: Anything like pastries . . .

RA: Pastries, all came from Nashiwa Bakery. They would deliver early in the morning. Monday to Saturday, they deliver. Sunday, my brother would go down there, pick up the bread. We used to pick up about 100 loaves. Then, go deliver to the camp. To individual . . .

WN: Oh, Sundays, you would deliver?

RA: Yeah. Only on Sunday, we take order and deliver. Other days, no. We don't take 100 loaf the other kind days.

WN: Why Sunday?

RA: Because we have to go and deliver that kind. We take the order. We get standing order already. Every Sunday, different family, one, two loaf bread. So, we go there, pick up, and Nashiwa one, go deliver that. Only on Sundays. But the other day one, they deliver, because take only about six loaf. Monday through Saturday, six loaf a day, and few pastry, this and that. But on Sunday, we take big order on that. Hundred loaves, and pastry, doughnut, things like that, go more, so we go over there [Nashiwa Bakery], pick. Then, my brother used to deliver . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WN: When you folks went to deliver and everything, it would be like they're buying from you, instead of Nashiwa?

RA: Yeah. Nashiwa won't come in and sell. They leave it up to us. Before, they used to come, you know, before we had the store. They used to come right inside the [Kaheka] camp, only on Sunday. We had Lahaina Bakery used to come inside Sundays. So, too competitive, yeah, was. From Lahaina Bakery, come in there, and we go around, too, see? So, we used to take the order ahead of time so we won't overstock, eh?

WN: You would take order and deliver all on one day?

RA: On Sunday. Only on Sundays. Get only about 100 families, so we tell 'em [to] tell ahead of time what they want.

WN: Just Kaheka, you went?

RA: Only Kaheka, yeah. No, we didn't go any other camp.

WN: So, your father paid about \$800 to have the store built?

RA: Yeah, I would say about \$800. Eight to nine hundred [dollars].

WN: What were the other expenses that he needed to start that store?

RA: Oh, then, we have to get the cases. Showcases and all this kind containers to put the candies inside--the jars, special kind jars with the glass cover. That's about all kind of expenses--showcases. Oh, we used to sell tablet and pencil, too--school supplies, we put.

WN: Where did you get the showcases from?

RA: The showcases through Hokama Store. Right next to Hokama Store they had a carpentry shop. Japanese, one Murioka or somebody. She asked the man to make for us. They delivered. We had three showcases, if I remember.

WN: Did you give any percentage of your profits at all to Hokama's?

RA: No. Just they helped us. No profit, nothing. They had nothing to do--just, they helped us out, that's all.

WN: So, she was a relative of your father?

RA: Yeah, relative of my dad.

WN: She said, "Oh, there's no store in Kaheka, so why don't you start one?"

RA: Yeah, yeah. I would think it was from there the story started--to open up a store.

WN: Did they look at the store as being a money-making venture?

RA: Yeah, yeah. She's sharp, you know. So, I'm quite sure my mother made money on the store. I'm quite sure they made money on the store, because . . .

WN: Do you know about how much, one day, they would make?

RA: Hmm Shee, I have no idea, but I would think, roughly, at least better than fifty dollars, I would think, from what you sell. My rough guess, because I really don't know. I didn't file the tax, no nothing on that. I think they had the Hokama people do it on that.

WN: So, your father paid the \$800, but did he have to pay any kind of

monthly rent or lease to the plantation?

RA: No, no lease. Just pay for the building, that's all. Once the building paid up, pau, you pay nothing. Just outright, like. You know, for the building.

WN: Was the store in a good central location?

RA: Yeah, in the center of the camp. That's why we moved, see? We [used to be] way on the outskirt--right next to the sugar field. A Korean family used to live right in the center of the place. But our house is way bigger, you know. Because we get plenty children, yeah, us. So, we talked to this Korean man--Mister What was the name? Koon, or something--Korean fella. He talks Japanese, see, this Korean man. Yeah, because they went Japanese school--I understand--way before [in] Korea. And the man said yeah, he will change, because our home is way bigger than his and their home was small.

So, we exchanged house. Because we had in mind to put up a store there, see? Right next to the furoba, too. People have to pass the store to go to the furo--the bathing one. The whole camp got to. Then, later on, the plantation extended our house [in] the back of our store, because that house is small, see? So, they added one more room for us. They were nice, the plantation. We moved house just for the store, and then, they put one more room for us to that house, because we get plenty [children]. So, the store came in the center of the camp.

WN: You folks lived . . .

RA: Right back of the store. And the furoba was right back of the store, too, one side--one end. So, people have to pass the store to take a bath. It was located in the center of the camp.

WN: So, what exactly was your role in the store? It opened in 1935, you left Maui in 1939 . . .

RA: Nineteen thirty-nine [1939], yeah. Only my role is to--whatever they get to have pick up goods from Hokama--I used to pick 'em up and bring 'em home, that's about all.

WN: You went just to Hokama to pick up?

RA: No, to Hokama, and then, maybe, she tell me certain store get oranges, cheap, so I used to run to Maui Dry Goods. That's the only store. Maui Dry Goods or Hokama. And then, Kahului--that A&B Store. That's the only place that I recall going to. The other was Paia Plantation Store. We used to order [from there] once in awhile to let me look good too, eh? So, we buy oranges from them, too, sometime. And they deliver 'em.

WN: So, this Mr. Baldwin, he didn't tell you folks to order from A&B or

Paia Plantation . . .

RA: No, no, no. As far as buying, he didn't say, "You buy all from this store," no. Only the thing, he said, not to sell clothing and different things like that. Then, we [would] become competitive to them. Other than that, no restriction. So, he was really nice.

WN: When you went to pick up, they gave you credit? Or did you pay cash?

RA: No. We charge 'em, too. If plantation store, we charged. On other places, too. Being the store, we charge 'em to the store.

WN: Maui Dry Goods, too?

RA: Yeah, charge 'em to the store.

WN: So, who else in your family worked in the store?

RA: I had my younger sister. All from below me, they used to work, I think. My sister that worked for that, she's still down here, too. She work for, now, HMSA [Hawaii Medical Service Association]. I think, they all work in the store, too. Work in the store, but just relieve. Because my mother put all the time inside. After my brothers go work, come back, they work in the store, because the store and the home was right next, see? So, the brothers and sisters helped little bit. My older sister stayed Hokama all the way, see? She board over there and stayed with that lady. Only once in a while, Sunday, maybe she come home and then go back again.

WN: Oh, I see. Were there any employees outside of the family that your mother hired?

RA: Where, ours? No. Nobody we hire. Just the family, no hire. That's why, that time, I had my third brother working, the oldest brother was working, my sister was working Hokama Store, and I was going school, working post office. So, the others were able to go school, yeah? All wen finish high school. So, the upper ones never go high school. My sister didn't go high school, my oldest brother didn't go high school, and my third brother didn't go high school. I'm the second, but I was fortunate, because of the school principal, I was able to go. Otherwise, I would have no high school education.

WN: So, from what time to what time did the store open?

RA: Oh, the store opened from 6 o'clock in the morning till maybe 10 o'clock in the night. People will just roam, you know, plantation. They get no place to go sit outside, so we used leave 'em open.

WN: People used to meet over there?

RA: Yeah, sit in the front, play cards, things like that. Then come inside, drink soda water.

WN: Every day? From Monday through Sunday, you opened 6 o'clock to 10 o'clock?

RA: Yeah.

WN: And after the store was closed, you folks just closed the store and then go . . .

RA: Yeah, go back home. I assume so, because I didn't work in there too long, too.

WN: Dinner time, did you folks all eat together?

RA: No, all separate. Maybe my father, mother in there, then when they get through, they come outside, and then, the other one come. But my mother did the cooking, and my sister. Because the store was open. Anyway, the store was next to the house already.

WN: Of all the things you sold, what was the best-selling item?

RA: Hmm I would say was candies, I think, and ice cream. Because other stuff was just help out. More candy and ice cream, I think. Soda water.

WN: So, candy, ice cream, soda water, can goods . . .

RA: Can goods, not too much, because they [customers] order from plantation [store]--most of them. But sometime, they run short, and they come. For us, we can live little bit cheaper, if we buy, too, yeah? Can goods. So, we eat our own can goods, too.

WN: How did your prices compare to the plantation store?

RA: Not too much, but little bit cheaper. Just like a discount from our thing. Not that cheap, but we buy . . .

WN: Plantation was cheaper?

RA: No, no. Ours would be. Oh, selling with No, we try to meet with the plantation, if we going sell outside. But for us, our own, we get 'em at wholesale, that's why, yeah? But if we going sell outside, you got to meet what the plantation sell, because you'll never sell 'em. So, whichever way, we try to meet whatever they selling. And if they [customers] don't buy, we going to eat for our own use. So, we didn't stock plenty, just little bit. Can goods, yeah, just little bit. As I said, the main item was candies, soda water and ice cream. And they sell cigarette, too.

WN: I was wondering, too, did your family still raise pigs while you had the store?

RA: No. When we had the store, pau already. Nobody wants to feed the pig, so we used to give our slop to the neighbor. The neighbor would collect. While we had the store, no, nobody wants to raise pig. (Chuckles)

WN: So, you folks just stopped?

RA: Yeah.

WN: What do you think was more profitable? The store or raising pigs?

RA: No, the store would be way better, yeah. Because the raising pig is not for money making, it's just to get rid of your slop. And then, you get little bit your meat. You not killing the pig, commercial basis. So, there's not much money in that. Just to help little bit out, that's about all, the pig.

WN: When you folks had the store, Mr. Miyata would still come around and take order?

RA: Still come around and take order. But he won't come to our home, you know, but go to the camp, around. Because we could buy anything from Hokama.

WN: Did he tell you anything? Like, well, did business go down a little bit since you folks opened the store?

RA: No, no.

WN: What about credit. Everybody paid cash at your store?

RA: No. We had them charge. They come, and certain one, we let 'em charge. They say, oh, they take one bread, put their name down. Then, payday, they come and pay. Some, of course, they lost out. Okinawan, Japanese, was all right, but those Puerto Ricans and the Filipinos, we couldn't collect, some. So, they watched that closely. They lost some account, that's what they say.

WN: But they let anybody who wanted to charge?

RA: Yeah, beginning part, yeah. Because they don't have money, we understand. Ourself, we were in that position. So, hopefully that day will come, but they lost some money on charge. But the Japanese and the Okinawans were good. It's only the Filipinos and the Puerto Ricans, they got stuck with it. Not too much, I guess. Maybe, they watch. They come, and if they owe us fifteen dollar, maybe they pay seven dollar that payday. They said they got stuck with something, so next month. But gradually, when their balance start coming big, then my mother say no can because they cannot pay like that.

WN: So, after a while, she started to do more cash?

RA: Yeah. Say, "You gotta pay your balance because this and that." Because they [RA's parents] get hard time, too.

WN: How about people from outside the camp? Could they charge?

RA: No, we never did charge them--outside--because we don't know who they are. They used to come and buy, some. You know, sometime, they come, and they want to go to visit friend. They come, they buy ice cream or things like that, to go to their home.

WN: Your mother used to give children free things, candy, like that?

RA: That I have no idea. (Chuckles) She may have done, you know. Some of the people come, she may have done because that's her nature, eh? She may have done. Because we don't pay rent, no nothing, see? So, wasn't that bad. You don't pay rent. If you were to pay rent, then I think the store would be rough, but no. Just pay for the building, eh, pau. And you don't have to pay every month, ten dollar or something--no fear. That's why was good on that kind base, you know.

WN: How about like bookkeeping? Who kept the records of the store?

RA: I think that was Hokama Store, you know. I think somebody who helped Hokama Store do their work did the same thing [for us]. My mother would put how much they bought, how much they sold, and then give that to my sister. Then, I think, go to the Hokama, whoever was doing that work. My belief, because I have no idea who was doing.

WN: Were there any problems with shoplifting or anything like that?

RA: Yeah, they had that, which later on came out, so that's the reason I left over there [Maui]. You know, since you talk about that. See, it happened that I used to be a strong Christian. I used to be with the Paia Japanese Christian Church. Just happen, Sunday, we were there. I was at the meeting. We were having conference with the other Wailuku church people, I think. Talking and planning for the coming convention. Then, my dad called me that night to come home. So, I was thinking funny, why?

He said, "Come quick."

So, I went. Told the group I had to go home. I told two of my Kaheka [friends]--they with me too at the meeting, see--that I'll come and pick them up later on. I had to go home. I don't know what the urgent they had.

WN: When was this?

RA: This was back in 1939, I think. Nineteen thirty-nine [1939], was, yeah, Sunday. So, when I went home, I saw this man, and my mother, and my dad, all in the parlor. Usually, I try help out the people in Kaheka Camp, see? I was sort of president of the club.

So, I asked them, "Do you have a problem?"

Then my dad asked me, "Did you report to the police about this boy stealing money?"

I said, "No, not that I know." I said, "I don't keep track of the money. Mama keep track all this." I asked my mother, "What happened?"

The man said that we wen report to the police the son took the money.

I said, "I have no idea."

My mother said she don't know, too. She didn't, eh?

I asked this man, "Who told you that your boy stole money from here?"

He said, no, the policeman came and took his son go to the police station.

So, I tell 'em, "I have no idea."

He say, "If you didn't say that, who else? Your mama and papa say they didn't report to the police."

"I'm telling you too, I don't know either."

So, this man said, "We go police station, then, go find out."

I said, "You like go, let's go." I said, "Because I don't know anything about this."

We went to the police station, Lower Paia, and the policeman was there. I asked him. I know the policeman, see, because he come to the post office all the time.

And I told the policeman, "You know, this man accused me of something."

"Yeah," he said, "I told this man, 'Don't you touch Arakawa boy because that boy don't know nothing.'" He told me--the policeman said--"You know this man like kill you that night."

I said, "Yeah? For what?"

"He think that you report."

I said, "Why don't you tell him."

He said, "Through police kind, we cannot inform who said that."

So, finally, the policeman take the club, like hit the man on the head, you know. He tell 'em, "You pupule man." He said, "I told you, don't go Arakawa because they don't know nothing. Arakawa don't know about your boy."

Then the policeman told the story. He said they got somebody in Kaheka Camp stole the record for stealing the car, see? From the Paia School secretary. So, they went to that boy--not his son, now, to one other boy--and asked him, "Did you steal car again?"

He said, "No."

They said, "Well, you know any bad boy at Kaheka Camp?"

And he's the one that told that boy stole money from this store, see? So, to see if that boy is telling the truth, they came to that boy's home. They were having dinner that night.

So, the policeman knock the door, he said, "Your boy home?"

He said, "Yeah."

"Call the boy out," he said. "You go Arakawa Store steal money?"

The boy said no [at] first, you know.

He [the policeman] said, "Somebody tell me you steal. I get the name, you know. You like we go see them?"

Then, finally, the boy admit. He say yeah, he stole money.

"How many time?"

"Oh, two, three time."

WN: How he stole money from your store?

RA: I guess when my mother go inside the house, I think, eh? I don't know how, but. And when I heard the man tell he like kill me, I get shocked, see? So, I told my dad I going. That's the reason why I came Honolulu, too. I tell, ah, forget Maui, and came down. So, 1939, I left over there.

So, he and I came home--the man. So, I drop him at his house before going. He said no, no. He said he got to go up to my house.

I said, "No, no, no. ossan, you don't have to come. You go home."

I said, "A man like you, no good, you know, yeah? We tell you we don't know, and yet, you like kill me for that."

He said--he talking Japanese--"junsa ga iuwan kara." You know, that "the policeman don't tell me who did."

"That's the law. They cannot tell you who told you. But he was so mad, that's why he told you that the other boy told that your son stole the money. We don't know. And that's how we found out."

So, the man came too, and apologized to my dad. Then, I went back to the church, and then, I start think about it. That's 1939, I came to Honolulu.

So, they had some theft on that. That's the only one I recall. We didn't report to the policeman. See, the man thought if we were friend, we should have told him first. You know, that "your boy stole money," but we don't know. It came from outside source that they said he stole. But that's what happened on that. He said he stole a couple times. Maybe some other people stole, too, I don't know. My mother never said anything. That's the only time we found out that somebody was stealing money. Because was no cash register, just put the money in the drawer.

WN: Lot of time, your mother would leave, and nobody would be watching the store?

RA: Probably. She'll go to the house, and then come back. Maybe, they just look at the chance. But that's the first time we found out somebody was stealing money. So, if that boy stole, maybe somebody may have taken, too. But we had no idea. At least, my mother never did say somebody stole money.

WN: Did that Japanese Club or anything go to your mother's store for donations or prizes?

RA: No. So far I recall, none. They don't come to our small store. They think it's too small, maybe. We (chuckles) don't have any kind to give them. It's only ice cream or soda water, see? No more merchandise, no nothing. I know the other one--the Plantation Store, Maui Shōkai, [Paia] Mercantile--yeah, they go for donate for picnic time, yeah? But other than that, no. Nobody comes around. Because they figure it's all ice cream and small little thing, that's why.

WN: So, you said people gambled---I mean, not gambled, but played cards . . .

RA: Played cards in the front, yeah.

WN: Were there tables out there? Chairs?

RA: No. They just put the soda boxes, and then, you know, we had only one bench over there. That's all. One bench. No table. Just a long bench, so they would be sitting, the plantation kind bench. You know, simple bench. Something like the horse. One [foot] by twelve [foot] board. So, they be sitting. One sitting there. They put the soda box, soda box, and sit on the soda box Ah, we had no objection. But, they weren't gambling that I know of. They just play cards.

That's the only recreation they had, you know, the plantation people. Those young boys, many of them, they didn't go high school, too. As soon as graduate eighth grade, pau already; work in the sugar field already. So, they go out work early in the morning, come home about, maybe, 3:30 [p.m.], take a bath, and then they come over there, sit down, talk story, I guess.

WN: That picture you showed me of the store, those kids sitting outside, that's . . .

RA: That must have been Saturday, in the morning, I would think so. Because usually, in the evening, the bigger boys. The kids not around. It's all the adults. You know, they stay till about 10 o'clock, then they go back [home]. Next day, work again. Sort of was hangout place. Every night, people would just They get no place to go, I guess.

WN: Would there be lights outside the store?

RA: Yeah, we had one light right on overhead. There's a light out there. It's not dark out there. Overhead, had the light.

WN: How big was the store? Do you remember, approximately?

RA: Hmm I would say eighteen to thirty feet, though. Long, you know, inside. Eighteen feet wide, and, I think, thirty feet inside. Because it's partition back--kitchen behind. It goes to, maybe, three-fourths of the way in, and there's a partition--wall with the door. We had the kitchen, sort of a storeroomlike, but there's a sink in there, too.

WN: That would be your home?

RA: No, not the home. That's for the store. In the home, we had another kitchen in there. That's the store, only.

WN: Your home was a different building or . . .

RA: Different building. Entirely different building, yeah. Because the home was already made before. The store [was] built when we tell 'em where we like the store to build. They just build right in front of the home. Only about, oh maybe, eight feet away from the home.

WN: Was the store alongside the road where the cars could pass by?

RA: Yeah. The car would pass in the front where the boys were sitting on the picture. That's the main--not the main road--but that's the center of the Kaheka road. Two cars can pass either way, see? Yeah, go both ways. So, the main road was right in front the store.

WN: Did your mother do any kind of other services for them? Like, maybe, banking. Did they give her any money to hold for them, or anything like that?

RA: No.

WN: So, you left in 1939, yeah? Was that the only reason why you left--because of that [incident involving theft]?

RA: No, not that. I had in mind I want to go to the commercial school, too--Honolulu Business College. My brother already left--the oldest one--he was in Honolulu already.

WN: You came to Honolulu with the idea of going . . .

RA: School.

WN: . . . eventually going into business?

RA: No, no. I had no business idea on that. Just came to get that business course in Honolulu Business College.

WN: Did your parents tell you anything, like, it would be good if one of you could take over the store, or anything like that?

RA: No, not that I know. Okay, if plantation, it's limited, you know, no? Because you can't sell all what the things you like--limited, yeah? But we had no idea of going into the store, though.

WN: Oh, when you first started? Did you folks ever think of expanding it some day? Maybe moving it someplace else?

RA: No. (Pause) Only time, I used to come Waipahu [Oahu]. That's my mother's cousin. They used to have a Tamanaha Store. No children, the man and the old lady. That store, we had in mind to take one time, after we had experience, but nah.

Hokama lady was saying, "Ah, Waipahu, no good. If you going open, why no open someplace--Kahului, like that."

So, we didn't. I had the chance of buying the Waipahu store. Don't have to buy, just like work there, and sooner or later, [I would] get. Because they had no children, see? But, that, the other fella took 'em, Tamanaha. Kiso Store. That's the one.

WN: Still there, yeah?

RA: Yeah. Kiso. Before that, used to be one old man over there. Same name, Tamanaha, but no children, the old lady. They died. Poverty, them, no? Oh, he had plenty money, that man [Kiso].

WN: So, your mother closed the store about 1964?

RA: Nineteen sixty-four [1964], I would say.

WN: Do you know some of the reasons why, or did she tell you at all?

RA: No, already all the people were moving away from the plantation. You know what I mean? The houses. They were start thinking of moving to Dream City and things like that. And then, she said she was getting tired, too, on the store already. Long hours. And they want to come down Honolulu, too, eh? So, finally, in 1965, they moved Honolulu. So, they close up.

Already my other brother moved to Mainland; my sister moved to the Mainland. I had a kid brother, doctor, was in Mainland. So, all were started going out, yeah, already. My sister working for Hokama Store said she was going to come to Honolulu, too, so they came down here, too. So, all eventually moved, yeah? So, I get nobody there. The one work for Hokama Store is up the Mainland now. So, my dad move up there, too. My dad had a home up here [Honolulu], so I bought 'em from them. That's the one I'm renting out, now.

WN: You have any last thoughts about Kaheka and the store?

RA: No. I just went the other year to look over the place, but all [the people] moved out from there. I really don't think much about Maui, anyway. (Chuckles) I guess that thing happened about the man, too, eh? Just give you a bad memory, over there. So, I never care for Maui after that.

WN: There's nothing left of Kaheka anymore?

RA: It's just a plain sugar field, only. The road is there, yeah--the road to go to the camp. But the road in the camp is all gone, already. So, you can more or less judge from the main road--the government road--to going in is, oh, about half a mile, and then, was the camp, see? So, that's the only landmark I can think of. The road that leading from that government road toward the camp, you can, but houses all gone. That's all sugar field. Give you a sad feeling, but.

WN: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Arakawa.

RA: Yeah, hope I could I get some pictures, if you like see,

but (chuckles) I guess that's about all--plantation one.

END OF INTERVIEW

**STORES and
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Volume I

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